

Martin J. O'Malley
Governor

Gloria Lawlah
Secretary



Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

DEPARTMENT OF AGING
Choice, Independence and Dignity for Older Marylanders

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Wesley Wood
410-767-1100

***It's Time for Maryland's Medicare Beneficiaries to Make Informed Choices --
Live Phone-A-Thons Discuss Medicare Open Enrollment and New Health Care Reform***

BALTIMORE, MD (October 10, 2013) -- Maryland Department of Aging Secretary Gloria Lawlah announces today that there will again be two live televised Phone-A-Thons to help Medicare beneficiaries analyze their current Medicare coverage and make changes, if needed. Health needs change and health plans may alter benefits and costs each year, making it important to evaluate and update Medicare coverage during open enrollment. The Annual Open Enrollment Period for Medicare begins October 15th and ends December 7, 2013. Beneficiaries are encouraged to review new plans in the marketplace and assess cost, coverage, convenience, and customer service. It's also an excellent time to learn about Medicare fraud and Health Care Reform. This is the fourth year for the popular Phone-A-Thons, held annually in both the Baltimore and Washington, DC media markets.

"Maryland's Medicare beneficiaries need every possible opportunity to understand the complexities of their coverage. That is why I am encouraging older Marylanders to be proactive, get the facts, and make informed choices. The Phone-a-Thons help beneficiaries to make decisions today so they can benefit in the year ahead," according to Secretary Gloria Lawlah.

The first live call-in will take place on Thursday, October 24, 2013 from 11:30am to 4:00p.m. at the WUSA-TV 9 studios in Washington, DC. The Maryland Department of Aging will target beneficiaries who live in Prince Georges, Howard, and Montgomery Counties, areas of the state known for their high concentration of older adults. Award winning WUSA-TV 9 news anchor Andrea Roane will promote the Washington Metropolitan Area regional event, which is expected to garner calls from Maryland, the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia residents.

"We have excellent State Unit on Aging SHIP partners in Washington, DC and Virginia to ensure all callers will get the expert help they need no matter where they reside in our region," Lawlah said.

The second live call-in event takes place on Thursday, October 31, 2013 from 12:00 noon to 6:30p.m. at the WJZ-TV 13 studios in Baltimore, MD. Callers will speak with trained Senior Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Counselors, who will be on hand all day to provide expert advice regarding Medicare and schedule appointments over the phone. Live televised coverage of this Phone-a-Thon will take place on the noon, 4 o'clock, 5 o'clock and 6 o'clock news programs.

For more information about the Maryland Department of Aging and the complete array of services and supports, please visit www.aging.maryland.gov/

###

301 West Preston Street • Suite 1007 • Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2374
Local: 410-767-1100 • Toll Free: 1-800-243-3425 • TTY users call via Maryland Relay
FAX: 410-333-7943 • www.aging.maryland.gov